

free publication of their proceedings, but the proposition has been rejected.

To be sure, a committee has been appointed to arrange a program of subjects for next year's meeting at Madison. But no enthusiasm has yet manifested itself. It is, however, certainly true that the circumstances are particularly propitious for the largest, the most cosmopolitan, the most notable gathering in 1893 that botany has ever had in this country. There will be a number of distinguished foreign specialists in attendance, and the fame and benefits of the convention will not be confined within our own geographical borders.

If there is a single botanist, or any number of botanists, who has a suggestion, a word of encouragement to the committee, or any opinion regarding the project, now is the time to give it expression through the journals. Silence means apathy, but what is wanted is enthusiasm.

CURRENT LITERATURE.

Canadian Mosses.¹

The Catalogue of Canadian Plants has now reached the mosses. The list with its annotations and descriptions of new species makes an octavo pamphlet of nearly 300 pages. Mr. Macoun has been a most industrious collector and the Herbarium of the Geological Survey will need to be consulted now by every student of our moss flora. Since 1861 he has been accumulating the material which is here elaborated. 953 species are listed, and numerous varieties, a considerably greater number than were included in 1884 in Lesquereux & James Manual for the whole of North America.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Macoun was not more cautious in the choice of bryologists to work up these rich collections. Undoubtedly he has found many new species; but no one can believe that 237² out of 953 are previously undescribed! Both Kindberg, who has been his chief collaborator, and Müller are looked upon by the best bryologists as too much inclined to establish species upon insufficient material and slight differences (to put the case mildly). Indeed the catalogue itself bears abundant evidence of this tendency.

A comparison of the determinations of the centuries of Canadian

¹MACOUN, JOHN and KINDBERG, N. C. — Catalogue of Canadian Plants. Part VI. — Musci, (Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada.) 8vo. pp. viii, 295. Montreal: printed for the government by W. F. Brown and Co. 1892. —25 cents.

²Fide Mrs. E. G. Britton in *Bull. Torr. Bot. Club.*

Musci, many of which were named by Kindberg, with the names given in this list shows gross carelessness either at one time or the other. The definitions of the alleged new species, nearly one-fourth of which are sterile, are inexcusably bad. They are so brief, unsystematic, comparative, and in such bad English that it is doubtful if the plants intended can be identified without a re-study of the nearly inaccessible types. For although Mr. Macoun states that "a duplicate of every specimen sent to Dr. Kindberg has been mounted and placed in the herbarium of this department" these cannot be considered the types, however helpful they may be.

Altogether we must conclude that what might have been a work of the greatest value to American bryologists has its good distributed through a heap of rubbish which somebody must sort over before the good can be separated from the bad. For there is much that is valuable, and the indefatigable industry of the Canadian Botanist cannot be rendered entirely nugatory by the poor judgment of his European collaborators.

Contributions from the National Herbarium.

The latest of these was issued September 20th, and forms No. 5 of the first volume. Its contents are as follows: 1. List of plants collected by Dr. Edward Palmer in 1890, on Carmen Island, by J. N. Rose. This island is in the lower part of the Gulf of California, 120 miles south of Guaymas, and, so far as known, has been botanically explored only by Dr. Palmer. The Flora is almost identical with that of the near-lying Californian peninsula. Of the 68 species known to the island, but 7 are thought to be endermic, 5 of which are described in the present paper, 3 of them being illustrated by full page plates. 2. List of plants collected by the U. S. S. Albatross, in 1887-'91, along the western coast of America, by J. N. Rose, D. C. Eaton, J. W. Eckfeldt, and A. W. Evans. This part contains six divisions: (1) List of plants from Cocos Island, by J. N. Rose. This island lies about 500 miles southwest of Panama. (2) List of plants from Galapagos Islands, by J. N. Rose. The plants of these famous islands were first collected by Darwin. (3) List of Ferns, from southern Patagonia, by D. C. Eaton. (4) List of Mosses, from Fuegia and Patagonia, by D. C. Eaton. (5) List of Liverworts from Southern Patagonia, by A. W. Evans, with two plates. (6) List of Lichens from Southern Patagonia, by J. W. Eckfeldt. 3. Revision of the North American species of *Hoffmanseggia*, by E. M. Fisher. The author enumerates 17 species, with full synonymy and range. The *H. falcaria* group is recognized in its polymorphic character, and 5 varieties of it proposed. Three new

species are described, and the whole revision gives evidence of a very painstaking work. 4. Systematic and alphabetic index of new species of North American Phanerogams and Pteridophytes, published in 1891, compiled by Josephine A. Clark. This index supplies a very great desideratum, and is properly supplied to botanists by the government. There is also in preparation an index covering preceding years back to 1885, and the promise is given hereafter of an annual index. It is startling to find that a list of the new species of North American vascular plants published in a single year occupies nearly 24 pages, but the number is very much reduced when it is noticed that all changes in nomenclature which have involved new combinations are included. The Division of Botany has put students of systematic Botany under great obligation in preparing this index and in promising its continuance.

NOTES AND NEWS.

REV. F. D. KELSEY, of Helena, Montana, has accepted the chair of Botany at Oberlin College. He is to spend the winter and spring at Harvard University.

DR. R. CHODAT, Professor of Botany at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, desires copies of papers written by American botanists for the library of the university.

THE FUNGOUS DISEASES OF IOWA CEREALS are briefly treated by Prof. L. H. Pammel, especially the rusts and smuts, in a recent Bulletin (No. 18) of the Iowa Experiment Station.

PRESENTATION EXERCISES were held October 15th, by the botanical seminary of the University of Nebraska, when a bust of Darwin was placed in the Herbarium of the University.

MR. J. B. FARMER, for some time past demonstrator of botany at Oxford University, has been appointed assistant professor of botany at the Royal College of Science in South Kensington, as successor to Dr. D. H. Scott, who has gone to the Jodell Laboratory at Kew.

IN A handsomely printed pamphlet of 78 pages, Professor J. E. Humphrey gives a very interesting account of "Amherst Trees." The work is designed primarily for the citizens of Amherst, but it contains much valuable information for the general reader, and notes that will be of use to the professional botanist.

THE CAUSES of electrical disturbances in the plant have been investigated by Otto Haake (*Flora*, 1892, pp. 455-487), who finds that respiration and carbon-dioxide assimilation are chiefly concerned, while the movement of sap, as Kunkel believed (*Arb. d. bot. Inst. zu Würzburg*, ii, p. 1), has but little to do with it.